

From: Aviles, Jesse [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=9FEDD63547464C589715A846AFAD05EC-AVILES, JESSE]
Sent: 4/3/2019 2:40:14 PM
To: Castillo, Amparo [Castillo.Amparo@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: Docket ID no. EPA-HQ-SFUND-1999-0010 - Re: The EPA Notice of Intent to Delete (NOID) (VB/I-70) Operable Unit 1 (OU1), Residential Soils, from the National Priorities List (NPL)

Hello Amparo:
Another comment to upload.
Thanks.

From: Michele Swenson Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Sent: Sunday, March 31, 2019 21:36
To: Aviles, Jesse <Aviles.Jesse@epa.gov>
Subject: Docket ID no. EPA-HQ-SFUND-1999-0010 - Re: The EPA Notice of Intent to Delete (NOID) (VB/I-70) Operable Unit 1 (OU1), Residential Soils, from the National Priorities List (NPL)

To: Jesse Aviles, Remedial Project Manager, US EPA,
Region 8, Mail Code 8EPR-SR, 1595 Wynkoop St., Denver,
CO 80202 aviles.jesse@epa.gov
Comments Re: The EPA Notice of Intent to Delete (NOID)
Vasquez Boulevard/Interstate 70 (VB/I-70) Operable Unit
1 (OU1), Residential Soils, from the National Priorities List
(NPL)
Comments to Docket ID no. EPA-HQ-SFUND-1999-0010

Commentary by Mary Hernandez

Videotape & Transcript by Michele Swenson

On November 18, 2018 I videotaped Mary Hernandez speaking in Swansea on the site of the 4-square mile Vasquez/I-70 Superfund Site, on the block of 46th & York St., just north of the I-70 West on-ramp, the site of her family's former home, now demolished. She pointed out the site of her family's first home across the street at 4642 York St., where family members dug out a basement when Mary was 9 years old. Subsequently, her father bought the

house on the west side of the street at the intersection of 46th & York St., where he built apartments attached to the back of the house, requiring another huge removal of dirt to accommodate the foundation. The family dug out the dirt by hand before they knew they were living in a Superfund Site, subsequently placed on the National Priorities List of Superfund Sites in 1999. Mary lived in the Swansea-Elyria-Globevilled area of the Superfund site for over 30 years.

Video + Transcript: ***Mary Hernandez Relates Health Effects of Growing up in the Vasquez/I-70***

Superfund Site View Video:

<https://youtu.be/mG7InFesReE>

Mary Hernandez's account of growing up in Swansea:

My dad was a construction worker. He liked to fix up houses and make them better for people. He was a big advocate for the neighborhood. His name was Joe Montoya. We were always helping him, always working....later on I lived at 4395 Columbine St. when I was pregnant. I actually found out that this property was very contaminated. I had a baby – she grew up okay.... She had two babies born blind with something called *Septo-Optic Dysplasia*. The youngest one had cerebral palsy. The other one had a lot of hormone problems...disabilities that were really hard.

I have a nephew that had cerebral palsy; and I actually have another nephew with cerebral palsy.

There's been a lot of things in the family that happened because of the soil contamination, and I'm sure because of

the traffic up there [pointing to highway] – the benzene and whatever...We've had people in the family die from cancer – a lot of cancer in the family. A lot of different hormonal things....with the thyroid, and different things that a lot of us have. We have a lot of anxiety, a lot of stress. That's why I'm worried about the noise that's going to be coming here pretty soon, when the trucks start really working, when they start digging and taking down the highway....

I'm worried about the people that they hired in the neighborhood to do the digging. For Kiewit, I think it's ...the meanest thing you can do is to hire people from the neighborhood to dig this ditch 40 feet under the ground, with the contaminated soil all over there. Because what has happened to us has been a real tragedy, and I would hate to see this happen to other people in the neighborhood.

There have been lots of miscarriages. Actually, my...older sister had 9 miscarriages. There have been a lot of things that happened to my sisters as far as having babies. They didn't come to full term, or they've had a lot of hysterectomies and different things through the years. A couple of people in my family, my daughter for one...had her back fuse together, so they just did two surgeries on her back. And my sister-in-law now has had her back fuse together, so she is going to have surgery real soon.

A lot of rheumatoid arthritis is in the family. A lot of stress – a lot of stress, so I'm worried about what's going to happen to the people....the train's right here [points northwest], going by all the time. Every time they go by,

there's a lot of noise. There's going to be a lot of noise right here [pointing south to the highway]....when they start digging this hole...I'm concerned about all the noise that's going to happen here with all the trucks. I'm concerned about where they're going to take this poisonous soil when they start digging it up...where's it going to go? Is it going to go someplace safe, so other people in other neighborhoods don't get contaminated? I'm worried about people just getting contaminated with the soil moving around. It's going to be tremendous....the kids in this neighborhood are already suffering – from the lead poisoning, from the benzene, from the cadmium, from the arsenic. Just lately they found some asbestos in Swansea [Elementary School] playground. I don't think they did anything to remedy that – they just built a parking lot over the playground. They put up a wall with some art to make it look nice for the kids.

Everything is kind of a bandaid around here – to pacify the people. A lot of people don't even know what the contamination is in the ground, and how it's going to affect them. I just want to say that in the future it's not only going to affect the people here in Swansea, Elyria and Globeville – it's going to affect the north side, it's going to affect the east side, it's going to affect Aurora, it's going to affect Montbello...because this dust that's going to be pulled out of 40 feet of digging [a trench] is going to affect a lot of people. I just want to give you warning, that this is not a good idea...there's going to be ramifications for whatever happens here in this neighborhood....this is a Superfund site, this whole area here, like 4 miles. They have come and dug up a couple, 3 or 4 inches, put some new dirt over it, didn't help much I'm sure. Some of the

houses were done 3 or 4 inches...they're telling me 12 inches, but I saw what they did to a couple of houses that were old here in the neighborhood, and it was like 3 or 4 inches that was taken out, and they covered it up with good soil. So, can you imagine 3 or 4 inches and what the wind's going to do to take it away on a good windy day....

There is a lot of contamination in the soil from the smelters from the early 1900s, late 1800s....mercury, lead, cadmium, arsenic, and there's also some zinc. If you research these poisonous soils, you'll find out how poisonous they really are. Just the other day we found out that one of the smelters was called *Swansea Smelter* and was located two blocks down the street [pointing south]They don't want to talk about it much, but that one was so poisonous because it only stayed open for about two to five years. They say if they stayed open less time, they never got the mixture just right to take care of the gold and silver, so they had to close. So the mixtures that they had going into the air and ground were very poisonous...I'm just here to give you warning, that all of this soil that is going to be dug up....they're digging up all over here...I've been around the whole neighborhood, and it's really dug up badly already, so the dust is just going everywhere.

I'll probably go to the next meeting for the noise variance and try to get them to slow down on the noise, because that noise....causes a lot of stress and anxiety. It causes sleep apnea – a lot of my family have these things, from the first highway going up, from the train being on the corner. It's going to cause a lot of bad things with the people. Actually, it's going to be pretty tremendous,

because people have lack of sleep, and it's going to cause a lot of health issues.